

The Public Health Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic in Cambridge

COVID-19 WEEKLY REPORT

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

FEBRUARY 8, 2021



Cambridge
Public Health
Department

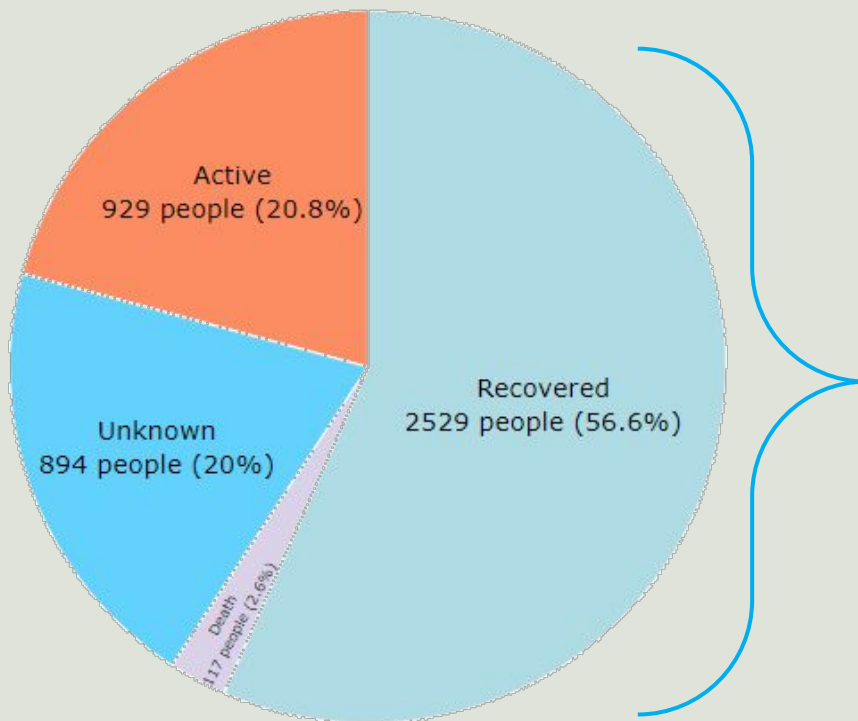


CHA Cambridge
Health Alliance



Case Snapshot (as of Feb. 7)

New Infections in Cambridge have declined since early January when rates reached their highest point in the pandemic.



4,469 Total Cases¹

(confirmed, probable and suspect)

- 4,167 in the community
- 302 cases in long-term cares

117 Deaths¹

- 64% of deaths were among LTC residents

Active Cases¹

- 21% of all cases are active

13.8 Confirmed Cases per 100,000¹

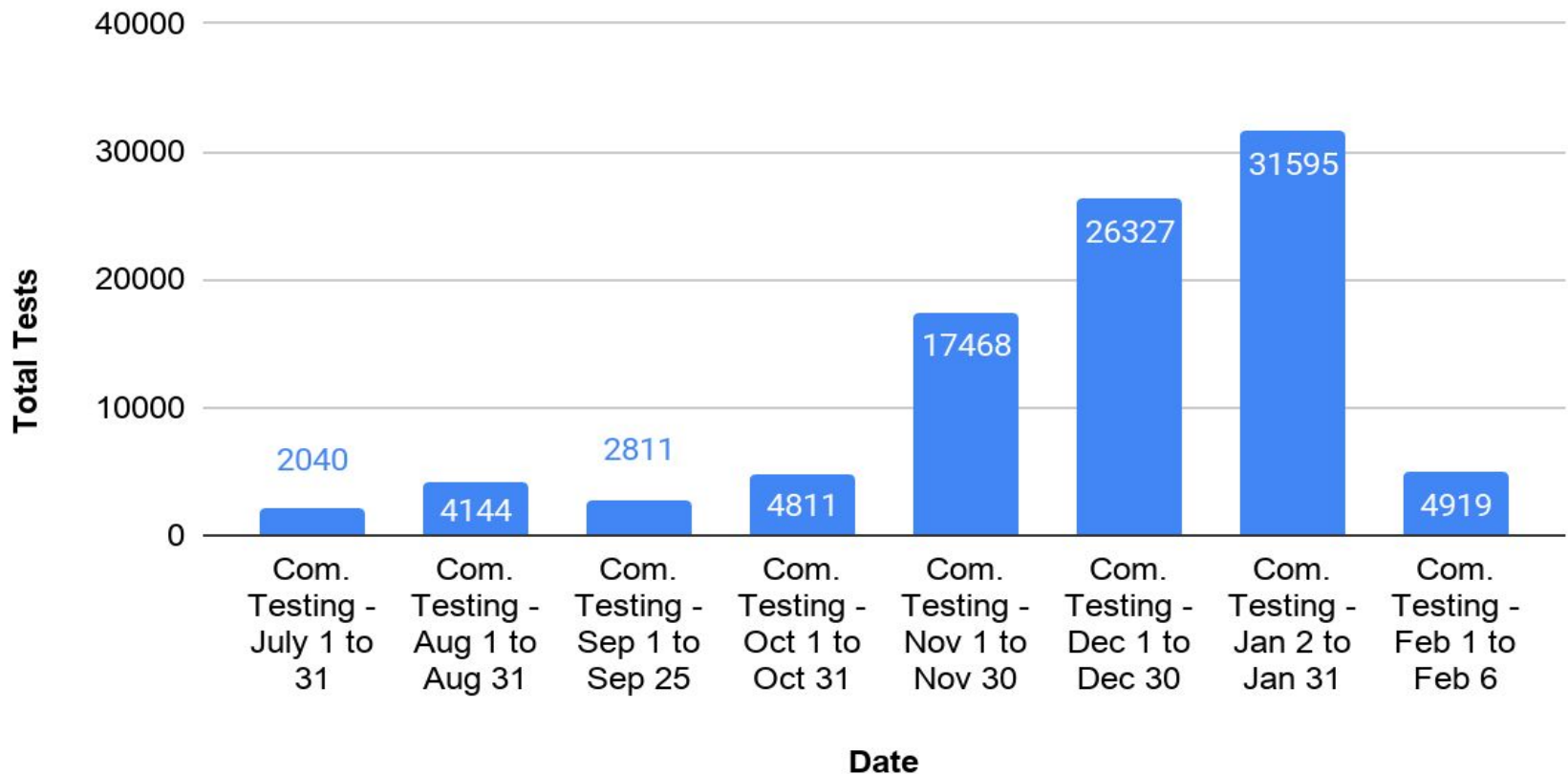
(7-day average for Jan. 31–Feb. 6)

Test Positivity²

- 1.06% (2-week period ending Jan. 30)

COVID-19 Community Testing

Community Testing - Total Tests per Month



COVID-19 Vaccine Update

COVID-19 Vaccination in MA: Phase 1 & 2 Eligibility Status

Phase 1

All phase 1 priority groups

All Eligible

Phase 2

1

Individuals age 75+

Eligible 2/1

2

Individuals 65+ and individuals with 2+ comorbidities

Not yet eligible

3

Early education and K-12 workers, transit, grocery, utility, food and agriculture, sanitation, public works, and public health workers

Not yet eligible

4

Individuals with 1 comorbidity

Not yet eligible

State COVID-19 Vaccine Update

- State announced a COVID-19 **Vaccine Scheduling Resource Line** for residents age 75 and older.
- Live call center, using 2-1-1 for making appointments.
- Massachusetts vaccinators had administered 754,874 doses (61%) received from federal government, as of Feb. 5.¹



↑ The state launched *Trust the Vax, Get the Facts*, a campaign focused on vaccine safety, trust and efficacy.

¹MA Weekly Vaccine Bulletin to local boards of health, received on 2/6/21.

City Vaccine Update - *Phase 1*

The Cambridge Pandemic Collaborative (CPC), led by Public Health, Fire, Police and Pro EMS, vaccinated Phase I eligible, second dose:

- **First Responders:** 81 second doses provided on first day of clinic (Feb. 5); clinic continues week of Feb. 8 for five days.
- **People Experiencing Homelessness:** Second dose will be administered week of Feb 16; same process as first dose (on site at shelters; warming center).
- **Other Phase 1 Eligible Groups:** Vaccinated (by way of example, dentists, laboratorians, clergy)

City Vaccine Update - *Phase 2*

Outreach to Residents/Staff in Senior Housing

- Cambridge Pandemic Collaborative is focusing on 10 Cambridge Housing Authority senior residence buildings first (approx. 1,300 eligible staff and residents).
- CPC vaccinated a total of 278 staff and residents of Millers River and Frank J. Manning apartment buildings on Feb. 4–5, following door-to-door outreach by the Cambridge Community Corps (C3).
- Outreach continues this week (Feb. 9–10) at the Lyndon B. Johnson and Daniel F. Burns apartment buildings, with plans to vaccinate by the end of the week.

COVID Vaccine Communication

Community Conversations and Town Hall Forums

- **Goal:** To respond and reach out to specific communities regarding vaccine safety and confidence, rollout, and access.
- Cambridge Public Health Department has developed a “Clinicians’ Speakers Bureau.”
- Cambridge Health Alliance medical providers of diverse backgrounds (race/ethnicity, gender, age).
 - Cambridge/Somerville chapter of the Massachusetts Senior Action Council
 - Birth to 3rd Grade Partnership/Cambridge Public Schools
 - Ragon Institute/Cambridge Public Library (Feb. 25)
 - Men of Color Task Force (Feb. 25)
 - Forum for Communities of Color with Mayor (date in Feb. TBD)

COVID Vaccine Communication (cont'd)

AUDIENCE RESEARCH

Goal: Determine best COVID-19 vaccine messages, messengers, and ways of distributing the message to residents, particularly those who have concerns about the vaccine.

- As part of the City/CPHD vaccine communication plan, interviews have been completed with individuals representing the following groups:
 - Seniors
 - Immigrants
 - Communities of Color
 - Residents with low-income
- The Cambridge COVID-19 vaccine opinion survey will launch next week (in eight languages).

COVID-19 Testing in K-12 Schools

CPS staff are being tested twice a week, on a voluntary basis, as part of a CPHD surveillance program. Testing is also offered to symptomatic students who become ill at school and student athletes.

**14,174
Tests**

Tests administered to CPS staff through the voluntary testing program since Oct. 15

1,200 Staff Tested

Total # of CPS staff who have been tested through the voluntary testing program since Oct. 15

11.8X

Median number of times a CPS staff member has gotten tested through the program since Oct. 15

308 students

Symptomatic CPS students and student athletes who have been tested through the program since Oct. 15

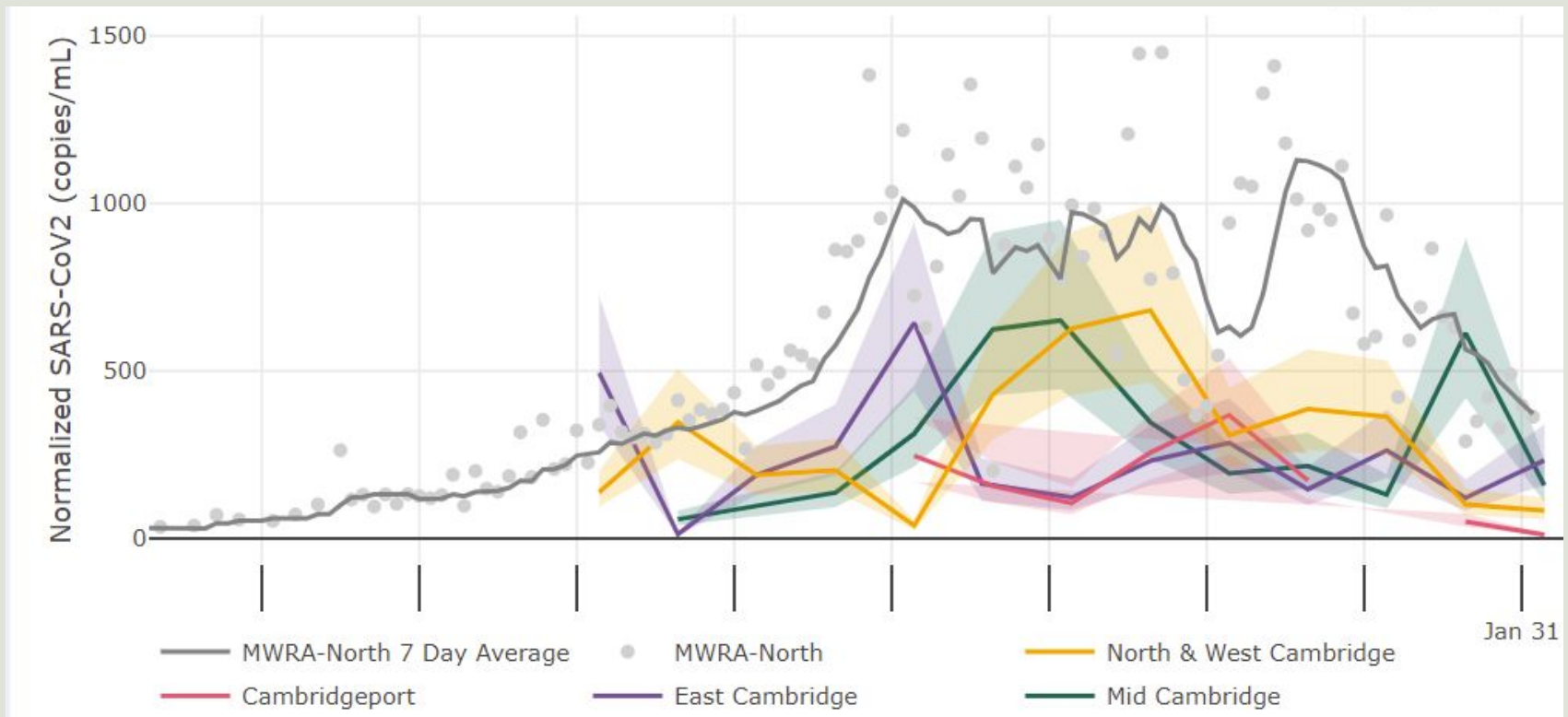
Data reflect Oct. 15- Feb. 8

COVID-19 Variants

- Seven (7) instances of variants of B.1.1.7 ; three were travel associated; 4 not linked to travel (as of 2/8).
- Evidence of limited presence, but can safely say that transmission is not widespread.
- Best defense:
 - Remain vigilant with mask wearing, social distancing and hand hygiene in order to prevent transmission of variant (as with COVID-19).
 - Get population sufficiently vaccinated.

Wastewater Surveillance Update

Weekly Municipal Wastewater Sampling Data



Wastewater Surveillance Update

- All Cambridge sewersheds have shown lower viral signals than the regional data, which helps validate the low positivity and case rates seen over time.
- Spikes generally return to average values within a week.
- The City's Expert Advisory Committee (EAP) agrees that this surveillance tool is more likely to be useful as an early warning of surges once/if the city and the region return to a fairly stable baseline (as in summer 2020).
- An early COVID-19 signal could direct attention to other indicators, such as case data or reported events, to prompt more careful examination of clusters and locations within a specific sewershed.